



[Top Iowa Fishing Spots for the Week of December 6.](#)

2018 Iowa Angler Survey Underway

This weekly fishing report is compiled from information gathered from local bait shops, angler creel surveys and county and state parks staff. For current information, contact the district fisheries office at the phone number listed at the end of each district report.

- [NORTHWEST](#)
- [NORTHEAST](#)
- [MISSISSIPPI RIVER](#)
- [SOUTHEAST](#)
- [SOUTHWEST](#)

NORTHWEST

[Black Hawk Lake](#)

As of today, ice thickness near the boat ramp at Ice House Point was 4 inches. There is open water off Ice House Point near Town Bay and in the east basin. Use extreme caution and check ice depth often if venturing onto the ice. **Bluegill** - Fair: Bluegills are being caught from open water under the inlet bridge and from the fishing shelter off Ice House Point. **Black Crappie** - Fair: Crappie are being picked up from the open water under the inlet bridge. **Yellow Perch** - Fair: A few perch are being picked up under the inlet bridge.

[Brushy Creek Lake](#)

Ice is unsafe for travel.

[Storm Lake \(including Little Storm Lake\)](#)

As of today, ice is variable from 3 to 8 inches in some areas. Anglers are starting to make their way out. Use extreme caution if venturing out and check ice thickness often. **Walleye** - Fair: A few walleye are being picked up through the ice.

Most lakes in the Black Hawk District have frozen over, but ice condition is variable. Some still have open water pockets kept open by waterfowl. Anglers are just starting to make their way out on some areas. If venturing out, use extreme caution and check ice thickness often. For more information, contact the Black Hawk District office at 712-657-2638.

Clear Lake

Ice fishing activity increased this week. Most anglers are fishing close to access points. Ice thickness is 3-7 inches. Aeration systems are in operation for the winter. **Yellow Bass** - Fair: Nice sized yellow bass are hitting small jigs and spoons. **Yellow Perch** - Fair: Anglers are catching perch, but a lot of sorting is needed. **Black Crappie** - Fair: Some nice sized crappie are being caught near rush beds. **Bluegill** - Fair: Fish shallow in rush beds with small jigs.

Lower Pine Lake

Ice fishing is not recommended. Areas of open water remains on Pine Lakes.

Rice Lake

Ice thickness is 6 to 7 inches. Aeration system is operating for the winter.

Silver Lake (Worth)

Bluegill - Good: Nice sized gills are being caught off the north access. Use small ice jigs tipped with insect larvae.

Lakes and ponds in the Clear Lake District are iced over. Ice conditions remain variable; use caution if venturing onto the ice. For information on the lakes and rivers in the north central area, contact the Clear Lake Fish and Wildlife office at 641-357-3517.

East Okoboji Lake

Lake is snow covered. There is a large open water area on the south end of the lake. No ice fishing activity observed.

Scharnberg Pond

Rainbow Trout - Good: 1500 trout was stocked on Nov. 17th. You must have fishing license and trout stamp to fish for and/or possess trout.

Silver Lake (Dickinson)

Poor ice conditions continue; open water on the east side of the lake.

Spirit Lake

Anglers are ice fishing Templar Park Lagoon; foot traffic only. Anglers are catching a mixed bag of panfish. Areas of open water pockets still exist on the north end of the lake. No ice fishing activity on the main lake.

Upper Gar Lake

Limited ice; lake remains open due to the flow.

West Okoboji Lake

Lake has started to form ice but, thin ice conditions exist. No fishing activity is on the lake.

Area lakes continue to have scattered open water and are snow covered from last week's storm. No activity on the lakes; ice fishing isn't recommended. For more information throughout the week, contact the Spirit Lake Fish Hatchery at 712-336-1840.

NORTHEAST

Cedar River (above Nashua)

Check ice depths often, especially where there is current. Flows remain high. Go with a buddy. Let someone know where you are going and when you will return. Backwaters have 3-4 inches of ice. **Black Crappie** - Good: Use small jig tipped with a waxworm or colored spike. **Yellow Perch** - Fair: Catch perch up to 10 inches on a waxworm. Bounce a jig off the bottom for fun action.

Decorah District Streams

Iowa's trout season stays open all year long. Second shotgun deer season opens Saturday. Many trout streams run through wildlife management areas. Wear bright colors and make noise so hunters know you're not a deer. **Brown Trout** - Good: Use larger flies or lures mimicking minnows. **Rainbow Trout** - Good: Fish near the bottom if no hatches are occurring. Use a weighted caddis stonefly or mayfly nymph. **Brook Trout** - Good: Try nymphs, emerger or aquatic bug patterns when hatches slow. Fish the calm area next to a fast channel of water at the head of a pool.

Lake Hendricks

No motorized vehicles allowed on ice. Use caution on ice. Ice is about 4 inches. Open water around the aerator; keep away from the aerator. **Bluegill** - Good: Early evening is best. For clear ice and water be set-up quiet and ready early. Use small jigs tipped with waxworm or spike near deeper water drop offs.

Lake Meyer

Ice is 3 to 4 inches. Check ice depths often, especially near springs. Caution recommended. **Bluegill** - Good: Early evening best. Use small teardrop shaped jigs tipped with waxworm in 15 feet of water. **Black Crappie** – Slow.

Volga Lake

Ice fishing is not recommended. Edges were open earlier in the week. Cold weather and short days will speed up ice formation.

With reports of anglers taking nice fish, more anglers will be on the ice. Use care on early ice as conditions can change fast and ice depths are highly variable. For current

fishing information, please call the Decorah Fish Hatchery at 563-382-8324.

[Cedar River \(Nashua to La Porte City\)](#)

Reports of anglers catching walleye on the river where there are open areas of water. Most reports have come from Bremer County. **Walleye** - Fair: Anglers are catching walleye using lead heads and plastic baits tipped with or without a minnow.

[Maquoketa River \(above Monticello\)](#)

Anglers have taken a few walleye on the Maquoketa River, mainly in Delaware County. **Walleye** - Fair: Anglers are catching walleye using lead heads and plastic baits tipped with or without a minnow.

[Martens Lake](#)

Anglers are getting out on areas of Martens Lake where there is good ice. It is not possible, as of today, to access the lake from across the reservoir on the north side. There have been no reports on fish.

[Shell Rock River \(Greene to Shell Rock\)](#)

No reports this past week on the Shell Rock River.

[Wapsipinicon River \(Tripoli to Troy Mills\)](#)

No reports this past week on the Wapsipinicon River.

Anglers are catching walleye where there are areas of open water on the rivers. Smaller lakes and ponds are starting to ice over, but ice fishing is still not recommended. Trout streams remain in excellent condition. Call the N.E. Iowa district office at 563-927-3276 for more information.

MISSISSIPPI RIVER

[Mississippi River Pool 9](#)

River level at Lansing is 8.4 feet and is expected to remain stable this week. Backwater ice is building with colder temperatures this week; reports of 3-4 inches of ice. **Walleye** - Fair: Try vertical jigging with hair jigs tipped with a minnow below the Lock & Dam. **Sauger** - Fair: Jig spoons or a hair jig with minnows in the tailwaters of the Lock & Dam. **Northern Pike** - Fair: Some northern pikes are being caught on tip-ups using shiners in backwater lakes and marina areas. **Bluegill** - Fair: Bluegill through the ice is picking up with a lot of sorting through smaller ones. **Yellow Perch** - Slow: A few perch are being caught through the ice in deeper cuts in backwater lakes.

[Mississippi River Pool 10](#)

River level at Lynxville is 16 feet and is expected to remain stable this week. Bussy Lake ice may not yet be safe from the boat ramp side. Anglers are walking in from the north end off Island Road. Avoid ice where there is current. **Walleye** - Fair: Try vertical jigging with hair jigs tipped with a minnow below the Lock & Dam. **Sauger** - Fair: Jig spoons or a

hair jig with minnows in the tailwaters of the Lock & Dam. **Northern Pike** - Slow: Some northern pikes are being caught on tip-ups using shiners in backwater lakes and marina areas. **Bluegill** - Fair: Bluegill through the ice is picking up with a lot of sorting through smaller ones. **Yellow Perch** - Slow: A few perch are being caught through the ice in deeper cuts in backwater lakes.

Mississippi River Pool 11

River level at Guttenberg is 8 feet and is predicted to remain stable next week. Backwater ice thickness varies from 3-4 inches. Avoid ice in areas with current. **Walleye** - Slow: Try vertical jigging with hair jigs tipped with a minnow below the Lock & Dam. **Sauger** - Fair: Jig spoons or a hair jig with minnows in the tailwaters of the Lock & Dam. **Northern Pike** - Fair: Some northern pikes are being caught on tip-ups using shiners in backwater lakes and marina areas. **Bluegill** - Fair: Bluegill through the ice is picking up with a lot of sorting through smaller ones. **Yellow Perch** - Fair: A few perch are being caught through the ice in deeper cuts in backwater lakes.

Upper Mississippi River levels remain stable this week. Backwater areas continue to make ice. Avoid ice in areas with current. Thickness is variable from 3-4 inches with little snow cover. Look for the single digits overnight to firm up ice conditions.

Mississippi River Pool 12

Water levels are receding and are 7.6 feet at the Dubuque Lock and Dam and 10 feet at the RR bridge. Water clarity is good. The water temperature is around 35 degrees. **Walleye** - Good: Jig and minnow or three way rigs with minnows are the most popular methods of catching walleye and sauger right now.

Mississippi River Pool 13

Water levels are receding and are 8.5 feet at the Bellevue Lock and Dam. Water clarity is good. The water temperature is around 35 degrees. The north ramp at Sabula is not in use this year due to bridge construction. **Walleye** - Good: Three way rigs with minnows or a jig and minnow are the most popular methods to catch walleye and sauger right now.

Mississippi River Pool 14

Water levels are receding and are 8.2 feet at Fulton Lock and Dam, 11.6 feet at Camanche and 6 feet at LeClaire. Water clarity is good. The water temperature is around 36 degrees. **Walleye** - Good: Jig and minnow or three way rigs with minnows are the most popular ways to catch walleye and sauger right now.

Mississippi River Pool 15

Water level is receding and is 9.5 feet at Rock Island. Water clarity is good. The water temperature is around 36 degrees.

Tailwaters are open to angling, but backwater ice is minimal for ice fishing. Water levels are slowly receding throughout the district. If you have any angling questions, please contact the Bellevue Fisheries Station 563-872-4976.

Mississippi River Pool 16

Tailwater stage at Lock and Dam 15 in Davenport is 9.55 feet and is falling this past week. Tailwater stage had risen close to 1.5 feet since the weekend with the rain and snowmelt. Tailwater stage is beginning to fall. Flood stage for Lock and Dam 15 is 15 feet. We have not received any tailwater fishing reports this week for walleye and sauger. Unsafe ice conditions.

Mississippi River Pool 17

Tailwater stage is 8.87 feet at Lock and Dam 16 in Muscatine and has been falling the past few days. Tailwater stage had risen close to 1.5 feet since the weekend, but has started to fall. We have not received any tailwater fishing reports for walleye and sauger. Unsafe ice conditions.

Mississippi River Pool 18

We have received no information about fishing on this water body this week.

Mississippi River Pool 19

Tailwater stage is 7.80 feet at Lock and Dam 18 above Burlington and is falling. Tailwater stage had risen close to 2 feet since the weekend, but has started to fall. Flood stage is 10 feet at Lock and Dam 18. We have not received any fishing information for this pool this week. Unsafe ice conditions.

Tailwater stages rose around 1.5-2 feet since this weekend with the heavy rain and snowmelt. Tailwater stages are starting to fall. Main channel water temperature is around 33-34 degrees. Tailwater fishing for walleye and saugers has been slow. Unsafe ice conditions. If you have questions on fishing Pools 16-19, contact the Fairport Fish Hatchery at 563-263-5062.

SOUTHEAST

Big Hollow Lake

The lake is pretty much open water as of midweek. **Muskellunge** - Slow: Report of a 37-inch muskie caught from shore down below the campground recently.

Lake Belva Deer

Last weekend's rains and warmer weather this week, so far, has opened up a good portion of the lake.

Lake Darling

Last weekend's rain and wind broke up the ice. Warm temperatures and a NW wind yesterday took the ice off most of the middle of the lake. Campground arm and most areas out of the wind remain iced over.

Lost Grove Lake

Mix of open water and very thin ice. West boat ramp is mostly ice in, as well as most of the more sheltered bays. The gate is closed for the winter for the parking lot by the dam.

Skunk River (Rose Hill to Coppock)

The Skunk River remains open and a little over half bank full. Most of the snow is gone from the parking areas and ramps.

For more information on the above lakes and rivers, call the Lake Darling Fisheries Office at 319-694-2430.

Coralville Reservoir

The lake level is at winter pool of 683.4 feet. Much of the lake has skimmed over with ice, but is unsafe for travel.

Kent Park Lake

The lake is currently drained for a lake restoration project.

Lake Macbride

The lake was open over the weekend, but it has skimmed over now.

Pleasant Creek Lake

Most of the lake is skimmed over with ice, but it is unsafe.

Many of the smaller lakes are skimmed over with ice. There is no safe ice in the Macbride District. For more information, contact the Lake Macbride Fisheries Station at 319-624-3615.

Lake Miami

Fishing pressure has been low with recent colder temperatures. Skim ice has been forming around the shore.

Lake Sugema

The north ramp is closed due to a parking lot construction project. Fishing pressure has been low with recent colder temperatures. Skim ice is forming around the shore.

Lake Wapello

Skim ice is forming around the shore.

Ottumwa Park Pond South

2000 trout were stocked on Oct. 26th. Skim ice is forming around the shore.

Rathbun Reservoir

The current lake level is 906.11 msl. Normal operating elevation is 904.0 msl. Skim ice is forming along the shore in some areas. Lake Rathbun has zebra mussels, so make sure to properly drain, clean, and dry equipment before transporting to another water body.

Red Haw Lake

Fishing pressure has been low. Skim ice is forming along the shore.

Many of the smaller lakes are starting to skim over with ice. There is no safe ice in the Rathbun district. The district includes Mahaska, Lucas, Wayne, Monroe, Appanoose, Wapello, Davis and Van Buren counties. Contact the Rathbun Fish Hatchery at 641-647-2406 with questions about fishing in south central Iowa.

SOUTHWEST

Des Moines River (Saylorville to Red Rock)

Walleye - Fair: Some walleyes are being caught below the dams in Des Moines and below the Saylorville and Red Rock spillways. Jig live minnows or cast shad imitating plastics.

Ponds and small lakes in Central Iowa are growing ice. Small ponds may be suitable for ice fishing by this weekend. Check thickness often. Lakes in Central Iowa still have large areas of open water. More fishing reports will be added when ice fishing starts. For more information on Central Iowa lakes and rivers, call Ben Dodd at 641-891-3795 or Andy Otting at 515-204-5885.

Lake Anita

Ice is unsafe.

Littlefield Lake

Ice is unsafe.

Prairie Rose Lake

Ice is unsafe.

Lakes and ponds in the southwest district are starting to freeze, but ice is unsafe. Fishing reports will resume once ice fishing begins. For more information, contact the Cold Springs office at 712-769-2587.